

PATENT

Applicant: Swanson

Serial No.: 09/505,354

Filing Date: February 16, 2000

Title: Composite Structures and
Methods for Ablating Tissue to Form
Complex Lesion Patterns in the Treatment
of Cardiac Conditions and the Like

Group Art Unit: 3739

Examiner: Peffley

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

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**COMMENTS ON STATEMENT OF REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE
IN THE NOTICE OF ALLOWANCE DATED JULY 14, 2006**

Sir:

Although the interfering claims have been canceled, applicant notes for the record that many in the remaining and allowed claims of the present application cover many of the methods for forming lesions around pulmonary veins **disclosed** in U.S. Patent No. 6,012,457 to Lesh ("the Lesh '457 patent"). Such claims include, but are not limited to, independent claims 44 and 62 of the present application.

Independent claim 44 calls for, *inter alia*, the steps of "expanding the expandable member," "engaging a circumferential region of tissue at a location where a pulmonary vein extends from the left atrium with the circumferential ablation device" and "ablating the circumferential region of tissue with the circumferential ablation element." Other than calling for "an expandable member and a circumferential ablation element," the method defined by claim 44 is not limited to any particular "circumferential ablation device." Additionally, with respect to the "expanding" and "engaging" steps, claim 44 is not limited to any particular sequence. Claim 44 therefore covers, for example, many of the balloon-based methods disclosed in the Lesh '457 patent.

Independent claim 62 simply requires “positioning a tissue ablation device adjacent to a circumferential region of tissue associated with an orifice of a vein that carries blood from the body or lungs to an atrium” and “forming a circumferential conduction block in the circumferential region of tissue with the tissue ablation device.” The “positioning” and “forming” steps are not limited to any particular techniques or tissue ablation devices. Claim 62 therefore covers, for example, many of the balloon-based methods disclosed in the Lesh ‘457 patent.

Respectfully submitted,

August 3, 2006

Date

/Craig A. Slavin/

Craig A. Slavin

Reg. No. 35,362

Attorney for Applicant

Henricks, Slavin & Holmes LLP

840 Apollo Street, Suite 200

El Segundo, CA 90245

(310) 563-1458

(310) 563-1460 (Facsimile)